

REMARKS

Claims 42-48, 50, 51, 55 and 57 are pending and under consideration in the above-identified application. Claims 1 – 41, 52 – 54 and 56 were cancelled previously.

In the Office Action dated December 16, 2009, the Examiner rejected claims 42-48, 50, 51, 55 and 57.

With this Amendment, claim 42 was amended. No new matter has been added as a result of the Amendment.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejection of Claims

Claims 42, 44, 48, 50, 51 and 55 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over JP 55-157604 in view of JP 52-063189 and Sugo et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,783,608).

Claims 45-47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over JP 55-157604 in view of JP 52-063189, Sugo et al. and in further view of Grant et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,242,503).

Claims 43 and 57 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over JP 55-157604 in view of JP 52-063189, Sugo et al. and in further view of Rodman (U.S. Patent No. 3,375,933).

Applicant respectfully traverses the above listed rejections.

The claims require a cleansing method that includes the step of providing a cleansing processing agent in a solid state which is non-water soluble. The cleansing processing agent includes a polymer having 20 to 50 mol % of acrylonitrile and 50 to 80 mol % of at least one of styrene and conjugated diene as a constituent unit. The claims also require the step of treating the polymer with an acid and/or an alkali to convert via hydrolysis the acrylonitrile into hydrophilic substituents and/or introduce ionic substituents into the polymer.

As discussed in the specification, the amount of acrylonitrile, styrene and conjugated diene have an effect on the amount of acrylonitrile that is converted to hydrophilic and/or the amount of ionic substituents introduced into the polymer. Specification, page 5. Specifically, if the at least one of styrene and conjugate diene in the polymer is less than 50 mol%, the amount of hyrdophilic substituents and/or ionic substituents on the polymer as a result of the acid and/or an alkali treatment step are reduced. Additionally, if the amount of at least one of styrene and conjugate diene is greater than 80 mol%, the overall amount of acrylontitrile units in the polymer are reduced, which in turn affects the amount of hyrdophilic substituents and/or inonic substituents introduced on the polymer as a result of the acid and/or an alkali treatment step.

JP 55-157604 does not teach or even fairly suggest the mol% of at least one of the styrene or conjugate diene as required by the claims. A *prima facie* case of obviousness exists when the claimed range overlaps or lies within a range disclosed by the prior art. MPEP 2144.05. Here, no such range is taught by JP 55-157604. As such, the range required by the claims is not obvious.

Thus, because 55-157604 fails to teach or even fairly suggest all the required elements of the claims, claims 42, 44, 48, 50, 51 and 55 are patentable over the above cited reference. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the above rejection be withdrawn. Additionally, the rejection of dependent claims 43, 45-47 and 57 which are based in part on JP 55-157604 should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that all claims are clearly allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: /David R. Metzger/

David R. Metzger
Registration No. 32,919
SONNENSCHEIN NATH & ROSENTHAL LLP
P.O. Box 061080
Wacker Drive Station
233 South Wacker Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60606-1080
(312) 876-8000